Smart card technology under APREG

1376. SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the successful disbursement of payment under Andhra Pradesh Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme and Social Security Pension Scheme in Warangal and Karimnagar districts using Smart Card technology has promoted the Government to reach to 8 more districts in future;

(b) whether a whoopping 30 lakh rural people will benefit from this Smart Card technology that AIMS has providing delivery of banking services at affordable cost to the low income groups;

(c) whether Rural Development Department has entered into partnership agreement with the nationalized banks for the Smart Card Technology; and

(d) to what extent this scheme is benefiting the poor people?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU): (a) Government of Andhra Pradesh is proposing to take up the scheme in all districts of the State in a phased manner. In phase-I, 6 districts will be taken up and it is proposed to operationalise in these districts in about 1 year.

(b) In the up scaled phase, the Government of Andhra Pradesh is proposing to take up 2 schemes *i.e.* NREGA and SSP to begin with for the disbursement through smart card technology. About 1 crore people will be benefited by the smart card technology in the entire state under NREGS and SSPs.

(c) Yes, Sir. The Rural Development Department, Government of Andhra Pradesh has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the nationalised banks for the smart card technology.

(d) Disbursement through smart card is a branchless banking model and major step towards financial inclusion. The project envisages delivery of service at village level. Beneficiaries will be saved travelling time and at the same time they can expect payments in time.

Misappropriation of money in Chhattisgarh under NREGP

1377. SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) how much money has been sanctioned to the State of Chhattisgarh under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme;

(b) how much money has been utilized by the State along with the details of projects thereof;

(c) whether some officials have been suspended in the State for misappropriation of NREGS money; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by Ministry in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU): (a) During 2006-07, the total central release to the State of Chhattisgarh under NREGA was Rs. 71850.74 lakhs and during current financial year (upto January, 2008) the total central release is Rs. 108623.60 lakhs.

(b) During 2006-07, the cumulative expenditure was Rs. 66882.16 lakhs and during current financial year (upto January, 2008), the cumulative expenditure is Rs. 94721.42 lakhs. A total of 32463 number of works were taken up during 2006-07 and a total of 65630 number of works have been taken up during 2007-08 (upto January, 2008).

(c) and (d) There were complaints regarding alleged purchase of pesticides and fertilizers from NREGA funds in Kanker district. The matter was taken up with the State Government